



SFM Report

June 2007

CAL FIRE State Fire Marshal Monthly Report to the California Fire Prevention Officers



**Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal**

As I write this message, I am in Rochester, New York during the final day of the 2007 ICC Code Hearing. Like everyone else here, I am tired and over-caffeinated, but most of all, very proud of the reputation California has earned this week as dedicated, thoughtful, and reasonable code professionals. Many people have expressed their observations that we are back in the game, doing well, and sending a strong message about fire and life safety issues.

California FPOs put in thousands of hours of preparation for the code hearings and it paid off as the membership voted their support for our proposed changes to many of the ICC codes. Very special recognition goes to Rick Terry, Fire Marshal/Deputy Chief for San Ramon Fire District. Chief Terry's many years of leadership in code development were apparent as he guided the 70+ California Fire Prevention Officers throughout the hearings. He sets a high standard of professionalism for the next generation to follow.

This was a very successful week for fire and life safety issues, even though the Residential Sprinkler Proposal lost by less than 100 votes out of a total of 950.

We were so close! There will be opportunities to support this important effort again in the next cycle and in California for the 2009 adoption. We have much work to do to succeed with this!

Soon, I will be focusing on two new projects: forming a Water Supply Task Force to address the various concerns of fire departments and water purveyors; and developing fire sprinkler educational seminars for building officials. Both of these will benefit from support within the fire prevention community.

In closing, a huge congratulations to the fire prevention folks in California and an even bigger thank you to each of you who attended Rochester and the Chiefs who supported you. You made the country a safer place!

Fire Prevention

FHSZ Maps and Public Hearings

As mentioned in our last edition, if you have SRA (State Responsibility Area) in or near your jurisdiction, CAL FIRE will be conducting hearings at which the public can comment on the new fire hazard zoning. The Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps are now complete and being distributed around the state. Staff will take public comment this summer in 56 of California's 58 counties. (Sutter and San Francisco don't include SRA). In May, CAL FIRE provided training to those staffers who will be conducting the hearings. The public comments will be collected and presented to CAL FIRE Director, Ruben Grijalva. Chief Grijalva will then accept or amend the maps this fall. Information is available at www.fire.ca.gov, click on "Living and Building in the WUI".



Give Us Your Illegal Fireworks

The State Fire Marshal has a responsibility to accept all seized illegal fireworks and dispose of them. If you have confiscated these products, see our website where you will find detailed instructions on how to report the seizure to us and arrange to have the contraband picked up for disposal:



<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/pdf/fireengineering/fw/fwsiform.pdf>.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal will again this year have aggressive enforcement and interdiction operations in place and we encourage local government to initiate high visibility patrols, seize illegal dangerous fireworks, and prosecute offenders.



ALWAYS REMEMBER that fireworks are energetic materials that are inherently dangerous. Heat, shock and friction may ignite them. In all cases **SAFETY** should be the primary concern. Call 1-888-FWX-ENFC (1-888-399-3632) (this number is for public safety agencies only) anytime you have a question, need immediate assistance, or have intelligence regarding illegal import or sales of Dangerous Fireworks.

The State Fire Marshal has a short training PowerPoint presentation available upon request. The target audience for this PowerPoint is first responders and contains information on charging sections, safe handling, and identification. For a copy, contact Supervisory Arson and Bomb Investigator Greg Smith at greg.smith@fire.ca.gov.

Fire and Life Safety

UC Riverside Fire

On Thursday May 17, at around 3:30 a.m., the University of California Riverside had a fire in the Aberdeen-Inverness Hall Dorms – West B Wing, 3rd Floor, Study Lounge. There were no injuries. The entire complex was evacuated. The Study Lounge has a built in kitchenette. Arson and Bomb Investigator Marge Yarbrough determined that the refrigerator had a motor malfunction that caused the fire. The damage to the structure and property loss is estimated to be about \$1 million. Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal Michelle Nachtmann inspected the remaining areas for fire and life safety to allow the students to return to their rooms with the exception of the 3rd Floor, West B Wing. Both Supervising DSFM Nachtmann and ABI Marge Yarbrough are preparing detailed reports on this incident.

Another UC Riverside Fire

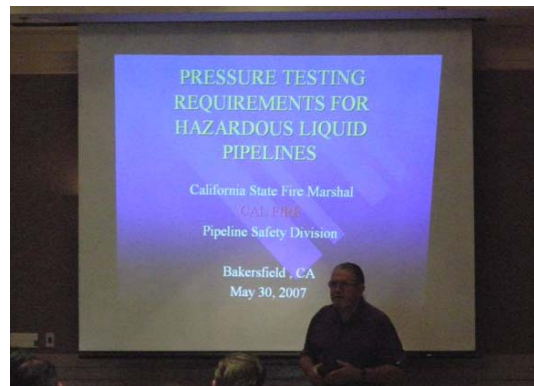
On Monday, May 21st at 3:34 a.m., the University of California Riverside had another fire in the Aberdeen-Inverness Hall Dorms – East E Wing in the Elevator Lobby/Corridor area. A small pile of trash sitting up against the stairwell was lit on fire. A passerby extinguished the fire with a portable fire extinguisher, the building was evacuated. There were no injuries or fatalities. This case is being handled by the Campus Police Department Investigators for possible arson.

A third UC Riverside Fire

On Monday, May 21st at approximately 10:10 p.m., the University of California Riverside had a third fire, this one in the Aberdeen-Inverness Hall Dorms – East B Wing, 1st Floor Corridor. Someone lit the paper lining of the corridor walls, on fire. The fire was extinguished by a student throwing water on it. The building was not evacuated. There were no injuries. This case is also being handled by the Campus Police Department Investigators for possible Arson.

Pipeline Safety

The Pipeline Safety Division hosted two days of Industry workshops in Bakersfield on May 30 & 31, 2007. More than 160 participants from industry, federal, state and local government, fire officials and safety consultants attended this SFM annually sponsored event. Presentation topics included state and federal laws pertaining to damage prevention, hydrostatic testing, low stress pipelines, permit streamlining and new technologies in pipe manufacturing. The attendance for this event was the largest since the first two workshops were held on the Queen Mary in 1983 & 1984. The presentations are available for viewing at <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/pipelinehome.html>



Office of the State Fire Marshal

<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov>
